

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A client-side system for an interactive video casting network, the system comprising:

a client terminal having a network interface including a first tuner to tune to a television signal associated with a first television channel, and a second tuner to tune to receive trigger information associated with a second television channel,

wherein the trigger information associated with the second television channel is capable of being obtained by the second tuner from a storage unit in the interactive video casting network,

wherein the second television channel is subscribed to allow the trigger information associated therewith to be stored in the storage unit; and

a remote device to receive the trigger information associated with the second television channel from the storage unit, the remote device including a remote display capable to display supplemental content corresponding to the trigger information associated with the second television channel while the first tuner is tuned to the television signal on the first television channel.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the client terminal further comprises a transmitter coupled to the second tuner to transmit the trigger information associated with the second television channel to the remote device.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein the remote device is coupled to receive the trigger information associated with the second television channel from the storage unit via a link, to a server, that is independent of the client terminal.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the remote device is capable to send a signal to the interactive video casting system to subscribe a channel that is currently tuned to by the first tuner to store trigger information associated therewith in the storage unit.

5. The system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the client terminal and the remote device is capable to receive trigger information associated with supplemental content unrelated to programming currently provided by the television signal tuned to by the first tuner.

6. An interactive video casting system, comprising:

a headend having a multiplexer to multiplex a plurality of input television signals for a corresponding plurality of television channels, wherein at least some of the television signals are accompanied by supplemental content including trigger information associated with respective television channels;

a trigger processor coupled to the multiplexer to obtain the trigger information from at least some of the television channels; and

a storage unit coupled to the headend to store the trigger information obtained by the trigger processor from the television channels, the television channels being subscribed to allow the trigger information obtained therefrom and stored in the storage unit to be provided to a remote device.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein the trigger processor is coupled to obtain the trigger information from all of the television channels, the system further comprising a server coupled to the trigger processor to provide the obtained trigger information from all of the television channels to the remote device.

8. The system of claim 6 wherein the trigger processor is coupled to provide the obtained trigger information to a client terminal, the client terminal being capable to tune to a first channel to receive a television signal therein and to tune to a second channel to receive the obtained trigger information unrelated to the television signal received via the first tuner, the client terminal further being capable to send the received obtained trigger information to the remote device.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein the trigger processor is coupled to provide the obtained trigger information to the remote device by way of a communication link independent of the client terminal.

10. The system of claim 8 wherein the trigger processor is coupled to provide the obtained trigger information to the client terminal by way of a cable modem connection.

11. The system of the claim 6 wherein the headend is coupled to receive an instruction from the remote device to obtain and store trigger information from a television program in a particular television channel that is tuned to prior to tuning to another television channel.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein the instruction instructs the headend to obtain and store trigger information from television programs based on viewer preferences.

13. The system of claim 6 wherein the headend is coupled to receive an instruction from the remote device to obtain and store trigger information associated with a particular television channel while a client terminal located proximate to the remote device is tuned to a television signal on a different television channel.

14. The system of claim 6 wherein the storage unit is capable to store a viewer preference related to determination of which triggers to obtain.

15. The system of claim 6, further comprising a trigger inserter coupled to the multiplexer to overload at least some of the television channels with non-programming-related trigger information that is to be provided to at least one of a client terminal coupled to a television and the remote device.

16. The system of claim 6 wherein the multiplexer includes an override channel as an input, the override channel capable to carry non-programming-related trigger information that is to be provided to at least one of a client terminal coupled to a television and the remote device in at least some of the television channels.

17. A method to provide supplemental content from an interactive video casting system to a remote device, the method comprising:

subscribing at least one television channel available via the interactive video casting system to obtain trigger information associated with that television channel;

providing a plurality of television signals via a corresponding plurality of television channels to a client terminal communicatively coupled to the interactive video casting system;

providing access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel to the remote device to allow presentation of supplemental content corresponding to the obtained trigger information on the remote device, at least alternatively to presentation of a television signal from a television channel tuned to by the client terminal; and

continuing to provide access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel if the client terminal tunes to another television channel to present another television signal.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the subscribed channel and the television channel tuned to by the client terminal to present the television signal comprises a same television channel.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein providing access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel to the remote device comprises sending the address information from the client terminal to the remote device.

20. The method of claim 17 wherein providing access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel to the remote device comprises sending the address information to the remote device via a communication link independent from a communication link between the interactive video casting system and the client terminal.

21. The method of claim 17 wherein subscribing the television channel comprises obtaining trigger information from the television channel based on viewer preferences.

22. The method of claim 17 wherein subscribing at least one television channel comprises subscribing all of the television channels to obtain trigger information from each channel.

23. The method of claim 17 wherein subscribing at least one television channel comprises dynamically subscribing that television channel in response to a viewer request to obtain trigger information from that channel, prior to tuning to a different channel by the client terminal.

24. The method of claim 17, further comprising providing non-programming-related trigger information to at least one of the client terminal and the remote device, the non-programming-related trigger information corresponding to supplemental content unrelated to subject matter in the television signal in the television channel tuned to by the client terminal.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein providing the non-programming-related trigger information comprises overloading at least some of the television channels with the non-programming-related trigger information.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein providing the non-programming-related trigger information comprises placing the non-programming-related trigger

information in an override channel, wherein presence of the non-programming-related trigger information in the override channel is capable to cause a signal from the override channel to be tuned to by at least one of the client terminal and the remote device.

27. The method of claim 24 wherein the non-programming-related trigger information can be provided based on viewer preferences.

28. A system to provide supplemental content from an interactive video casting network to a remote device, the system comprising:

a means for subscribing at least one television channel available via the interactive video casting system to obtain trigger information associated with that television channel;

a means for providing a plurality of television signals via a corresponding plurality of television channels to a client terminal communicatively coupled to the interactive video casting system;

a means for providing access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel to the remote device to allow presentation of supplemental content corresponding to the obtained trigger information on the remote device, at least alternatively to presentation of a television signal from a television channel tuned to by the client terminal; and

a means for continuing to provide access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel if the client terminal tunes to another television channel to present another television signal.

29. The system of claim 28, further comprising a means for providing non-programming-related trigger information to at least one of the client terminal and the remote device, the non-programming-related trigger information corresponding to supplemental content unrelated to subject matter in the television signal in the television channel tuned to by the client terminal.

30. The system of claim 28 wherein the means for providing non-programming-related trigger information include at least one of a means for providing an override channel and a means for overloading at least some of the television channels.

31. An article of manufacture, comprising:

a machine-readable medium usable in an interactive video casting system and having instructions stored thereon to:

subscribe at least one television channel available via the interactive video casting system to obtain trigger information associated with that television channel;

control transmission of a plurality of television signals via a corresponding plurality of television channels to a client terminal communicatively coupled to the interactive video casting system;

provide access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel to the remote device to allow presentation of supplemental content corresponding to the obtained trigger information on the remote device, at least alternatively to presentation of a television signal from a television channel tuned to by the client terminal; and

continue to provide access to the obtained trigger information associated with the subscribed television channel if the client terminal tunes to another television channel to present another television signal.

32. The article of manufacture of claim 31 wherein the machine-readable medium further includes instructions stored thereon to provide non-programming-related trigger information to at least one of the client terminal and the remote device, the non-programming-related trigger information corresponding to supplemental content unrelated to subject matter in the television signal in the television channel tuned to by the client terminal.

33. The article of manufacture of claim 31 wherein the instructions to provide the non-programming-related trigger information include instructions to overload the non-programming-related trigger information in at least some of the television channels.

34. The article of manufacture of claim 31 wherein the instructions to provide the non-programming-related trigger information include instructions to provide the non-programming-related trigger information in an override channel.

35. An interactive video casting system, comprising:

a broadcast center having a multiplexer to multiplex a plurality of input television signals for a corresponding plurality of television channels, wherein at least some of the television signals are accompanied by supplemental content including trigger information associated with respective television channels;

a trigger processor coupled to the multiplexer to obtain the trigger information from at least some of the television channels; and

a storage unit coupled to the headend to store the trigger information obtained by the trigger processor from the television channels, the television channels being subscribed to allow the trigger information obtained therefrom and stored in the storage unit to be provided to a remote device,

wherein a client terminal for a television for the interactive video casting system is coupled to present supplemental content corresponding to trigger information on the television,

wherein the television includes a screen to display supplemental content available from the interactive video casting system,

wherein the client terminal is capable of being communicatively coupled to the interactive video casting system to receive the trigger information from the interactive video casting system and is coupled to present at least some of the supplemental content on the screen of the television in addition to television signals from television channels,

wherein the interactive video casting system includes a plurality of content sources communicatively coupled to a plurality of broadcast centers,

wherein the broadcast centers are coupled to storage mediums to store at least some of the supplemental content to be made available to the client terminal, and

wherein the interactive video casting system is capable to provide the address information to the remote device via different communication channels, including at least one of a plurality of television broadcast channels and a communication channel with a communication network.

36. The system of claim 35 wherein the broadcast center comprises part of a satellite delivery system.

37. The system of claim 35 wherein the interactive video casting system comprises an interactive television system.

38. An interactive video casting system, comprising:

a broadcast center having a multiplexer to multiplex a plurality of input television signals for corresponding plurality of television channels, wherein at least some of the television signals are accompanied by supplemental content including trigger information associated with respective television channels;

a trigger processor coupled to the multiplexer to obtain the trigger information from at least some of the television channels; and

a storage unit coupled to the headend to store the trigger information obtained by the trigger processor from the television channels, the television channels being subscribed to allow the trigger information obtained therefrom and stored in the storage unit to be provided to a remote device,

wherein a client terminal for a television for the interactive video casting system is coupled to present supplemental content corresponding to trigger information on the television,

wherein the television includes a screen to display supplemental content available from the interactive video casting system,

wherein the client terminal is capable of being communicatively coupled to the interactive video casting system to receive the trigger information from the interactive video casting system and is coupled to present at least some of the

supplemental content on the screen of the television in addition to television signals from television channels,

wherein the interactive video casting system includes a plurality of content sources communicatively coupled to a plurality of broadcast centers,

wherein the broadcast centers are coupled to storage mediums to store at least some of the supplemental content to be made available to the client terminal, and

wherein the interactive video casting system is capable to provide the address information to the remote device via different communication paths, including at least one of a plurality of television broadcast channels and a communication path with a communication network; and

a trigger inserter coupled to the multiplexer to insert non-programming-related trigger information in at least one of the television channels.

39. The system of claim 38 wherein the trigger inserter is coupled to the multiplexer to overload a plurality of the television channels with non-programming-related trigger information that is to be provided to at least one of a client terminal coupled to a television and the remote device.

40. The system of claim 38 wherein the multiplexer includes an override channel at an input terminal coupled to the trigger inserter, the override channel being capable to carry non-programming-related trigger information that is to be provided, in a plurality of the television channels, to at least one of a client terminal coupled to a television and the remote device.

41. The system of claim 38, further comprising a trigger mixer coupled to receive a television signal and coupled to the trigger inserter to receive non-programming-related trigger information from the trigger inserter, the trigger mixer capable to mix the non-programming-related trigger information into the received television signal.

42. The system of claim 38 wherein one of the paths to provide the address information to the remote device via different communication paths includes a path that uses a cable modem in a client terminal to receive the non-programming-related trigger information from the interactive video casting system.